KENT

COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM,

BARMING HEATH, MAIDSTONE.

COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND

THIRTY-FIRST YEAR.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

1863.

PRESENTED TO THE COMMITTEE OF VISITORS, 22ND JANUARY, 1864.

AND TO THE COURT OF GENERAL SESSIONS, APRIL, 1864.

MAIDSTONE:

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THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT'S

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

The Medical Officer and Superintendent submits to the Committee of Visitors the Seventeenth Annual Report; which however includes in its survey the previous six months, and extends from 4th July 1862 to 31st December 1863. Seventeenth Annual Report.

On the 4th July 1862 the date of the last Report, there were in the Asylum 278 males and 366 females, total 644. Numbers 4th July 1862.

From that date to the end of the year 1862 there were admitted males 53, females 50, total 103: the discharges were 16 males, 19 females, 35 total: and 15 males, 19 females, total 34 died, leaving in the Asylum on 1st January 1863 males 300, females 378, total 678. Admissions and Removals, during latter half of 1862.

During the year 1863 109 males, 116 females, total 225, were admitted; there were discharged 53 males, 60 females, 113 total: and the deaths numbered 63 males, 45 females, 108 total; leaving in the Asylum on 1st January 1864 males 293, females 390, total 683. Admissions and Removals, during 1863.

The highest number on any day during the past year was on the 30th September, when the Asylum contained 323 males, 403 females, 726 total; and the lowest was on 8th April, when it was thus males 295, females 382, total 674. Highest and lowest numbers.

The mean daily population during the year 1863 was 300 males, 385 females, 685 total. Mean daily population for 1863.

Per centages of recoveries and deaths.

The recoveries were 27.18 per cent. on the admissions from 4th July to 31st December 1862; and for the year 1863 they were 39.11 per cent. The mortality for the six months of 1862 was 4.55 per cent. on the total number under treatment; and for the year 1863 11.96 per cent.

Small increase of numbers.

Upon referring to Table No. 1 it will be observed that the Asylum contains 7 men less and 12 women more than on the corresponding day last year; and that the total increase for the year is five.

Increase in admissions in 1863.

There has been an increase in the number of admissions of 17 men and 21 women as compared with 1862.

Length of time before patients are brought to the Asylum.

With respect to the admissions, there is much reason to regret the length of time which is in some cases allowed to elapse after symptoms of insanity are manifested, before a patient is brought to the Asylum, as the chance of cure is thereby seriously diminished.

Small number of cases deemed curable.

Of the present 683 inmates only 56 can be considered curable, and even among these the probability varies widely.

Females only accompanied by men.

The frequent practice of bringing female patients to the Asylum only accompanied by men is much to be deprecated; my recommendation enforced by the authority of the Committee will no doubt convince Relieving Officers that every case of a female patient should be accompanied by a female guardian.

Discharges.

The discharges merely require the comment that of the 15 patients discharged unimproved 13 were removed to other asylums; which number includes 4 females transferred to the new Criminal Asylum at Broadmoor.

Mortality.

The increased rate of mortality needs the qualifying notice of the advanced age of some of the patients, as well as the state of exhaustion in which many were brought to the Asylum. With respect to the ages it will be seen by Table No. 10 that 12 of those who died during the year 1863 were upwards of 70 years old, 4 had exceeded 80, and one man died at 93 years of age. Two men and one woman were admitted in a moribund state; the woman by great care and attention recovered, and

left the Asylum well in mind and body; the men with 5 others died at the following periods after admission respectively—2 days, 3 days, 7 days, 11 days, 13 days, 16 days, and 20 days. Eleven men died within 35 days of admission.

Inquests.

Two inquests have been held since the last report. In one instance death resulted from apoplexy, and a verdict was returned to this effect: the attack was brought on by obstruction to the breathing caused by the man's having stuffed the corner of the sheet into his mouth; he had a delusion that snakes were in his stomach, and he was constantly trying to extract them with anything he could get hold of, and he had doubtless put the sheet in his mouth with this intention; certainly not from any suicidal tendency. In the other case which was that of a female death was caused by disease of the heart, as proved by a post mortem examination of the body. She was seized with a fainting fit whilst in a warm bath, and died shortly after being removed from it.—Verdict, "Died from Hypertrophy of the Heart."

Births.

Two births have taken place in the Asylum since the last report. In one case the mother was reduced from maniacal exhaustion previous to her premature confinement, which she survived only a few days. The infant died shortly after its birth. In the other case the patient made a satisfactory recovery and left the Asylum well in mind and body.

Condition of Patients.

In respect of the bodily condition of the patients there has been no contagious or epidemic visitation; and while remembering the somewhat increased rate of mortality as accounted for above, the Asylum may be considered to have been in a very healthy condition.

Commissioners in Lunacy.

Two of the Commissioners in Lunacy visited the Asylum on the 11th and 12th December 1862, and again on the 24th and 25th November 1863.

Employment of Patients.

There has been an increased number of patients employed; the lowest number upon the books as employed was on the 30th January when there were 220 males, 168 females, 388 total; and the highest was on the 1st December, males 217, females

205, total 452. The amount however of needlework is not so much as may yet be attained; although the Asylum does contain a very large proportion of helpless patients, incapable of any constant employment; nevertheless we anticipate a large increase in the category of newly-made articles and repairs, as soon as those head attendants and workwoman enter upon their duties, whose appointments have already received the approval of the Committee.

Cricket.

Cricket has been the chief summer amusement; Mr. Spencer continues to promote this wholesome and manly game, and his continued endeavours to occupy the minds of the patients and promote their cure are most praiseworthy.

Winter Entertainments.

The winter entertainments and dances have been renewed both this and last season; they are much appreciated by the patients, and by rationally cheering them are well calculated to conduce towards their recovery.

Weekly Concerts.

Since the formation of our band which although yet in its infancy shews the vigorous growth of that period, weekly concerts have been held in the wards; reading and writing classes have been established; and it is in contemplation to follow the example of other asylums, and get up some kind of theatrical entertainment.

Magic Lantern, &c.

The magic lantern, bagatelle boards, and other amusements which have been allowed in the Additional Building, are to be estimated as means to promote mental recovery.

Organ.

The new Organ in the Church has been accompanied with very happy results; singing classes are held weekly and the attendance at the Sunday Services is doubled. The Church accommodation which was calculated for 250 is insufficient for our requirements; immediate steps are being taken to increase it; another hundred patients at least might attend if there were room for them.

Attack on Dr. Huxley.

On the 23rd April a homicidal attack was made upon Dr. Huxley by a patient who attempted to stab him with the dinner fork; fortunately an attendant was close at hand or a valuable life might have been sacrificed. The kindliness with

which all the patients speak of their late superintendent, adviser, and friend, and especially the inmates of this particular ward, proves that the man must have had some delusion respecting him.

In May last Dr. Huxley retired from his functions of 17 years continuance as Medical Officer and Superintendent. Dr. Huxley's Retirement.

Mr. Simpson having been in residence a month was appointed on the 1st of August Second Assistant Medical Officer; he is fully anxious to carry out the directions of the Superintendent and promises to become an efficient officer. MrSimpson's Appointment.

The ordinary day attendants have been relieved from the duty of night watching, which had previously been performed by them in rotation; there is now a night watch in each division of the principal building. Night Watching.

One female attendant after a lengthened service of 24 years has resigned her duties; which ill-health rendered her incapable of discharging with her usual efficiency. Nurse's Retirement.

The insufficient supply of water, especially on Sundays, is much felt, and is now under the notice of the Committee. Water Supply.

Raised mounds and pavilions are in course of formation in two of the women's and one of the men's airing courts; these will have the effect of giving the patients a much more extended view of the surrounding country; besides being an improvement additionally important because these back airing courts which do not receive the morning sun, are very wet during the winter season. Raised Mounds.

Various statistical tables are appended for the purpose of illustrating the foregoing observations. Tables.

The Medical Superintendent has in conclusion to record his approval of the manner in which the officers of the Asylum perform their respective duties; as well as to express his satisfaction with the conduct of the attendants and servants. Conclusion.

WM. P. KIRKMAN, M.D.,

SUPERINTENDENT.

TABLE No. 1.

Shewing Admissions, Discharges, Deaths, &c.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
In Asylum 4th July 1862 date of last report ...	278	366	644
Admitted up to the end of 1862	53	50	103
Discharged ,, ,, ...	16	18	34
viz.— Recovered	14	13	27
viz.— Relieved	2	5	7
Absent on trial...	—	1	1
Died up to the end of 1862...	15	19	34
Remaining 1st January 1863	300	378	678
Admitted in 1863	109	116	225
Discharged ,, ...	53	60	113
viz.— Recovered	45	43	88
viz.— Relieved	3	5	8
viz.— Not improved	1	1	2
viz.— Removed to other Asylums ...	4	11	15
Died in 1863	63	45	108
Remaining 1st January 1864	293	390	683
Of which deemed curable	20	36	56
,, Criminals	15	—	15
,, County Patients	13	11	24
Average daily number during 1863	300	385	685
Highest number during the year	323	403	726
Lowest ,, ,, ...	292	382	674
Highest number employed	217	205	452
Lowest ,, ,, ...	220	168	288
Accommodation in the two buildings	344	430	774
Vacancies...	51	40	91

TABLE No. 2.

Occupations of the 225 Patients admitted during the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Agricultural Labourers	52	—	52
„ Wives	—	39	39
„ Widows	—	4	4
Army Pensioner	1	—	1
Bakers	2	—	2
„ Wife	—	1	1
Bricklayer	1	—	1
„ Wife	—	1	1
Bookbinder	1	—	1
Butcher's Widow	—	1	1
Cordwainer	1	—	1
Chimney Sweep	1	—	1
Carpenters	4	—	4
Carpenter's Wife	—	1	1
„ Daughter	—	1	1
Currier	1	—	1
Clerks	2	—	2
Coachman's Wife	—	1	1
Cutler	1	—	1
Costermonger	1	—	1
Domestic Servants	3	37	40
Druggist's Wife	—	1	1
Draper's Assistant	1	—	1
Engineers	2	—	2
„ Wives	—	2	2
Grocer	1	—	1
Green Grocers	2	1	3
Gardeners	4	—	4
Hatter	1	—	1
Hawker	1	—	1
Laundresses	—	4	4
Mariners	9	—	9
No occupation	6	14	20
Organist	1	—	1
Painters	2	—	2
Publicans	3	—	3
Shoemakers	3	—	3
Tailors	2	—	2
Seampstresses	—	8	8
Total	109	116	225

TABLE No. 3.

Religious Denomination of the 225 Patients admitted in the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Church of England	73	81	154
Roman Catholics	8	6	14
Wesleyans	6	8	14
Baptists	5	4	9
Presbyterians	3	2	5
Calvinists	1	3	4
Independents	1	4	5
Primitive Methodists	1	2	3
Lutheran	—	1	1
Not known	11	5	16
Total	109	116	225

TABLE No. 4.

Degrees of Education of the 225 Patients admitted in the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Well Educated	10	5	15
Able to Read and Write	61	82	143
Able to Read	13	12	25
Unable to Read	15	11	26
Unknown	10	6	16
Total	109	116	225

TABLE No. 5.

Ascertained and supposed causes of Insanity in the 225 Patients admitted in the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Intemperance	23	8	31
Epilepsy	9	10	19
Hereditary Predisposition, (sole cause) ...	11	10	21
Domestic Affliction	7	12	19
Fright	4	3	7
Puerperal state	—	7	7
Disappointed affections	1	4	5
Reduced circumstances	6	5	11
Fever	3	1	4
Natural decay	1	3	4
Religious fanaticism	3	3	6
Remorse	—	2	2
Coup de soleil	1	—	1
Hyperlactation	—	1	1
Bodily disease	3	3	6
Jealousy	1	2	3
Shipwreck	1	—	1
Physical debility	2	3	5
Unknown	33	39	72
Total	109	116	225

Hereditary predisposition to Insanity traced in 21 men and 20 women.

TABLE No. 6.

Domestic condition of the 225 Patients admitted in the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Married	59	45	104
Single	42	51	93
Widowed	8	20	28
Total	109	116	225

TABLE No. 7.

Causes of Death in those cases which terminated fatally during the latter 6 months of 1862.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
General Paralysis	7	—	7
Paralysis, Apoplexy, and Epilepsy ...	3	4	7
Pulmonary Consumption	—	8	8
Natural Decay	2	2	4
Cancer	—	2	2
Maniacal Exhaustion	3	—	3
Disease of Heart and Lungs	—	1	1
Disease of Kidneys	—	1	1
Lumbar Abscees	—	1	1
Total	15	19	34

TABLE No. 8.

Forms of Insanity in those cases which terminated fatally during the latter half of 1862.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Mania and Melancholia	4	14	18
Dementia	11	3	14
Idiocy	—	2	2
Total	15	19	34

TABLE No. 9.

Causes of Death in those cases which terminated fatally during the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
General Paralysis	17	6	23
Paralysis, Apoplexy, and Epilepsy ...	21	11	32
Maniacal Exhaustion	10	6	16
Pulmonary Consumption	5	8	13
Disease of Heart and Lungs	6	5	11
Natural Decay	3	8	11
Tabes Mesenterica	1	1	2
Total	63	45	108

TABLE No. 10.

Forms of Insanity in those cases which terminated fatally in the year 1863.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Mania and Melancholy...	24	14	38
Dementia	29	17	46
Idiocy and Imbecility	10	14	24
Total	63	45	108

TABLE No. 11.

Age at Death and Periods of Residence of those Patients who died in the Asylum during the Six Months ending 31st December 1862.

Number in each Decennium.				Time of Residence.			
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Under 1 Month.	Under 1 Year.	Under 10 Years.	From 10 to 13 Years.
From 70 to 80 years	1	2	3	—	—	2	1
60 „ 70 „	1	2	3	—	—	2	1
50 „ 60 „	3	1	4	—	—	4	—
40 „ 50 „	3	5	8	1	3	4	—
30 „ 40 „	4	6	10	1	3	6	—
20 „ 30 „	3	2	5	1	2	2	—
Under 20 years of age	—	1	1	—	—	1	—
Total	15	19	34	3	8	21	2

TABLE No. 12.

Age at Death and Periods of Residence of those Patients who died in the Asylum during the Year 1863.

Number in each Decennium.				Time of Residence.			
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Under 1 Month.	Under 1 Year.	Under 10 Years.	From 10 to 27 Years.
Above 80 years	1	3	4	—	1	2	1
From 70 to 80 years	3	5	8	—	2	5	1
„ 60 „ 70 „	9	5	14	1	5	5	3
„ 50 „ 60 „	9	8	17	2	5	9	1
„ 40 „ 50 „	4	10	24	3	7	13	1
„ 30 „ 40 „	20	4	24	2	13	7	2
„ 20 „ 30 „	5	7	12	—	6	6	—
Under 20 years of age	2	3	5	—	4	1	—
Total	63	45	108	8	43	48	9